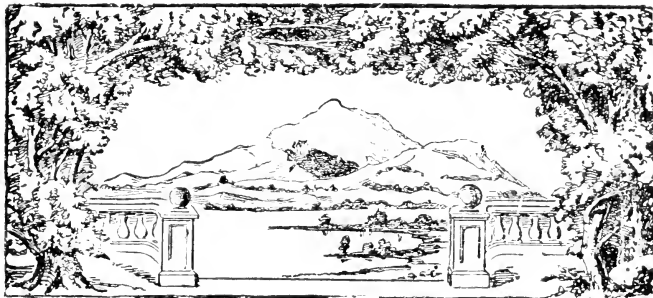


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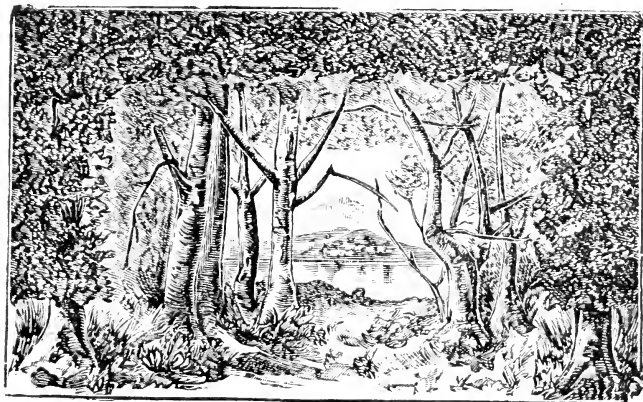
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unmounted ..	3	3	0
20 inches by 30, per sheet	2	0	6
	4	4	0
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HER DEAREST FRIEND.

(ROSEMARY REES).

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HER DEAREST FRIEND

HER DEAREST FRIEND

By
ROSEMARY REES

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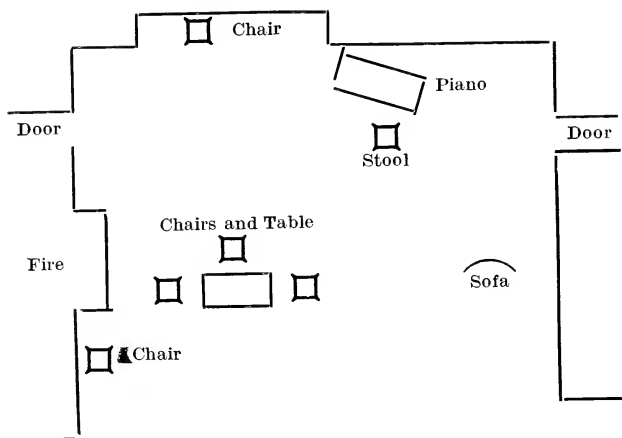
HER DEAREST FRIEND

Produced at the Coronet Theatre, London, by Mr. Percy Hutchison, on February 4th, 1907, with the following cast :—

MOLLY ANSTRUTHER	.	MISS VIOLET LEY
URSULA HAMMOND	.	MISS ANNIE STALLMAN
ROBERT MENTETH	.	MR. DREW MACKINTOSH

Any make-up articles or wigs used in the performance of “Her Dearest Friend” may be hired or purchased reasonably from Messrs. C. H. Fox, Ltd., 27, Wellington Street, Strand, London.

SCENE PLOT



HER DEAREST FRIEND

SCENE.—*Poorly furnished sitting-room in MOLLY ANSTRUTHER'S flat. Art muslin curtains, muslin-covered packing-case for holding cups and saucers, etc. Shabby sofa, cottage piano.*

TIME.—*The present, Autumn. Afternoon.*

As the curtain rises MOLLY is discovered standing on table nailing up curtains at window. She is girlish and pretty and dressed simply but becomingly. URSULA is lying on the couch by the fire smoking a cigarette. She is dowdily dressed and is very plain, wears eye-glasses, her hair is strained tightly back, and she has a priggish, assertive air.

URSULA. You don't know your world, my dear Fancy trusting *anything* that wears a frock-coat and hat.

MOLLY. Bobby doesn't. He won't. That's one of the things he's so annoying over.

URSULA. My dear Molly, all men are *wrong 'uns*.

MOLLY. Well, Bobby's the exception, then. He isn't a wrong 'un. He's the dearest friend I have in the world except you, and I do so want you to know each other and be friends too. Oh, *do* like him, Ursula.

URSULA. My dear child, when the strap-hangers cease from troubling and the Kaiser is at rest, you can expect me to make a friend of *any* man.

MOLLY. Oh, I know you despise men because you're so much cleverer than most of them ; but do be nice to Bobby, just for my sake.

URSULA. Why, Molly, I believe you're in love with him!

MOLLY (*hammering violently*). Indeed I'm not. (*Hits her finger.*) Oh, I've hammered my finger.

URSULA. How stupid of you! No, my dear, the only attributes which men possess and women don't are essentially those of the brute.

MOLLY (*still nursing her finger*). They can hammer nails without hammering their fingers, though. That's rather talented of them. (*Down to table.*)

URSULA. Don't talk "men" to me, *please*.

MOLLY. But Bobby's different. He's just—— (*Up to window, she puts some tacks in her mouth.*) He's just Bobby.

URSULA. For goodness' sake, Molly, don't put things in your mouth. It's such a vulgar habit.

MOLLY. Oh, I'm full of vulgar habits. (*Up to window.*)

URSULA. You'll be full of tacks in a minute and that'll be worse.

MOLLY. That certainly sounds more painful. But really you mustn't class Bobby with the ordinary average man. I don't quite know how to describe him, but he's the sort of man who'd be kind to a woman when she's ill. (*Down to window.*)

URSULA. I know the kind. (*Gets up from sofa. Crosses R., gets match for cigarette.*) A good-to-his-mother sort of person. A man rather like a fish—with the bones out. A filleted-plaice young man. (*Crosses R.*)

MOLLY. Ursula, you *are* horrid. He's not a bit like that. I do so want you two to be friends (*Sits.*) You know, ever since I can remember Bobby seems to have taken the place of all the usual relatives ordinary people have and I haven't. He's my sisters and my cousins and my aunts all rolled into one.

URSULA (*smoking*). You'll end by marrying him, my dear. (*Crosses back to sofa.*)

MOLLY (*turning suddenly*). Marrying him ! Haven't I sworn, like you, never to marry, but to live for literature ? (*Tacks to table.*)

URSULA. My dear child, of course you'll marry, and you'll probably imagine you're happy. You haven't my highly-strung temperament. I decline to spend my life as a white slave feeding the brute. (*Crosses.*) I prefer to develop my own individuality. I'm not the marrying sort, but you'll marry, you'll probably marry your Bobby.

MOLLY (*tacks to mantelpiece*). Marry Bobby ! Why, he's the last man on earth I'd dream of marrying. Marry a man who only cares for musical comedy, says picture galleries bore him, and never reads anything but Kipling. Oh, Ursula !

URSULA (*with disgust*). Kipling ! The prophet of the drunken and debased !

MOLLY (*pulling chair down R.C.*). Oh, Ursula. Well, I must confess—don't be awfully shocked—I have a sort of sneaking regard for Kipling myself.

URSULA. You *read* that disgusting man !

MOLLY (*putting on table-cloth*). Well, I did once to please Bobby, and—I'm afraid I rather liked it—I do try to please Bobby sometimes. He's always been so good to me, but I'm afraid I can't enthuse much over his *East End work*.

URSULA. His East End work ?

MOLLY (*to fireplace*). Yes, he loves collecting hordes of children from the Slums and giving them parties. He says he likes to hear them laugh. I'm always so busy wondering which would be the easiest way of getting them clean that I haven't time for anything else. I think the only way would be to *boil* them.

URSULA. And the best way too, vile little beasts. The future thieves and murderers of the world. Ugh ! They ought to be got rid of somehow. (*Rising.*) Well, I must be off.

MOLLY. You're not going ?

URSULA. I must, my dear. I've got an article to finish, "The Sufferings of a Suffragette in Holloway." It must go in to-night.

MOLLY. But I've asked Bobby to tea and I want you to meet him. Oh, you must stay.

URSULA. It's half-past four now, I'm afraid I can't.

MOLLY. Oh, Ursula, that is mean. Bobby ought to be here at any moment now. You *must* stay. (*Crosses to URSULA.*) Have one more cigarette and I'll make the tea at once. The kettle's nearly boiling.

URSULA (*seating once more and taking cigarette*). Well, I'll stay five minutes, not a second longer.

MOLLY. That's a good girl. (*Pulls table over hole in carpet*). I always have to manœuvre my furniture when Bobby's coming. I get the table over that hole in the carpet and make the best I can of things generally.

URSULA (*sneeringly*). Is he so very particular, then?

MOLLY. No, but he's got such an uncomfortable habit of wanting to give me new carpets and things if my room looks shabby. (*Butter.*)

URSULA (*laughing sneeringly*). I shouldn't think a poor stock-broker's clerk could afford much in the way of carpets.

MOLLY. Oh, but Bobby isn't a clerk any more. He's a real live stock-broker. (*Back of table. Flowers.*)

URSULA. What do you mean?

MOLLY. Didn't I tell you about it? Bobby came into his uncle's money some time ago. Oh dear, that'll be another thing to prejudice you against him, *his money*. You hate wealthy people, but Bobby isn't frightfully rich. It's not more than £1,500 a year. (*Arranging flowers.*)

URSULA (*gradually sits up*). £1,500 a year!

MOLLY (*putting out tea-cups*). And what he makes.

URSULA (*rising still more*). And what he makes.

MOLLY. It does sound rather horridly opulent

though, doesn't it? And I'm afraid he's got another of your pet abominations, a brand-new motor.

URSULA (*sitting up very straight*). A brand-new motor.

Knock heard.

MOLLY. That's his knock.

URSULA *rises*.

Oh, don't go, Ursula.

URSULA. No, I'll wait a few moments. I think I left my gloves in your room; I'll get them.

MOLLY. All right; I'll let him in.

Exit L.C.

URSULA (*slowly*). Fifteen hundred a year. (*Looks at herself in the glass, putting her hair tidy.*) And what he makes.

Glances at door L.C., then crosses room hurriedly to door R. Listens to voices off.

Fifteen hundred a year and a brand-new motor car.

Exit door R.

Enter MOLLY and BOBBY from door L.C.

MOLLY. I thought you'd have been here earlier, Bobby. I suppose your silly old motor had something the matter with her carburettors or something and stopped on the way.

BOBBY. Don't abuse the car. She only stopped once, and that was because a cabby swore at her. She hates bad language.

MOLLY. Sit down there by the fire. I'll take your coat.

BOBBY. Where are you going to sit?

MOLLY. I'm not going to sit anywhere. I'm going to make the tea.

BOBBY. Let me help you. (*At fire.*) Where's Mrs. Thomas? Out?

MOLLY. Yes.

BOBBY (*gets up*). That's all right. Now what shall *I* do. I'm *rather* good at cutting bread and butter.

MOLLY. There you are, then.

Gives him loaf and butter at table.

BOBBY. This is the first time you've ever let me have tea alone with you since you came to London ; do you know that, Molly ?

MOLLY. You're not going to have tea with me alone now.

BOBBY *drops butter.*

BOBBY. What *do* you mean ?

MOLLY. My dear friend Ursula Hammond's here. She's in my room. She'll be out in a minute. (*Sits.*)

BOBBY. What a mean trick !

MOLLY. What's a mean trick ?

BOBBY. Having her here. I thought we were going to have a nice cosy little tea-party all to ourselves. Molly (*takes her hand*), why won't you ever let me see you alone nowadays ?

MOLLY (*pulling her hand away*). The kettle's boiling. (*Crosses to fireplace, R.*)

BOBBY *now gets the kettle and makes the tea.* BOBBY *gets kettle in L. hand.*

BOBBY. Oh—oh—it is hot.

MOLLY. You've burnt yourself.

BOBBY. Yes, I have. It's very serious.

(Pretends his hand is burnt).

Changes hand and places slice of bread and butter over handle as sandwich—holding out burnt hand to
MOLLY.

BOBBY (*savagely cutting bread and butter again*). Hang the kettle. (*Comes L.C.*) When am I going to see you alone, Molly ?

MOLLY (*at fireplace*). I don't think there's any necessity for you to see me alone.

BOBBY. You don't want me to ask you to marry me before a roomful of people, do you?

MOLLY (*bending over kettle*). You've asked me that before and had your answer.

BOBBY. Do you think I'm going to take that answer? Certainly not. I warn you. (*Waving the knife*). The very next time I meet you at the Greenways or the Boyds I shall say—no matter how many people are in the room—"Molly Anstruther, when are you going to marry me?"

MOLLY (*turns up*). And I'll reply, *Never*, NEVER, NEVER!

BOBBY. That would be very foolish and quite untrue.

MOLLY. It would be neither.

BOBBY. My good young woman, in the first place it would be foolish because it would provoke an argument that wouldn't interest the other occupants of the room, and in the second place it would be untrue because sooner or later you've *got* to marry me.

MOLLY (*half-vexed*). Bobby, you're not nice this afternoon. (*Crosses to L.*) I don't want you to talk about that.

BOBBY (*quietly*). I'll talk about whatever you please, dear.

MOLLY. Go on cutting the bread and butter and I'll do the talking. I asked you here to-day to meet my dearest friend, Ursula Hammond.

BOBBY. Well!

MOLLY. I want you to be awfully nice to her. She has such a splendid character. I know lots of people say unkind things about her, but they don't know her as I do. She offends people because she always speaks the truth.

BOBBY. What an unpleasant person!

MOLLY. Oh, Bobby, don't be unkind. She's

thoroughly honest, and I think honesty's everything. Don't you like honest people?

BOBBY. Hum, I don't know that I care much about the candid friend who insists on pointing out your failings to you on all occasions. How's that for butter? (*Holding up a buttered slice.*)

MOLLY. And she's so awfully clever.

BOBBY. Clever! (*Drops knife, puts down bread.*)

MOLLY. Yes, she writes most beautiful poems.

BOBBY. Poems! (*Making for his coat.*) Good Lord, I'm off!

MOLLY (*running after him and pulling him back.*) Bobby, come back.

BOBBY. My dear Molly, what on earth should I have to say to a poetess?

MOLLY. You'll get along beautifully if you'll only be nice and kind and your dear old self.

BOBBY. But I've never run up against a poetess before, you know, Molly. What on earth shall I talk about?

MOLLY. She'll do the talking and you'll be interested.

BOBBY (*doubtfully*). Shall I?

MOLLY. Yes, but she hates the ordinary small-talk of society. She says the froth of conversation must be blown aside before one can partake of the draught of true intercourse.

BOBBY. Does she? What does she mean? It sounds as though it had something to do with beer. Poems! I think I had better go, Molly. (*Going towards door.*)

MOLLY. Bobby, how horrid you are! You're not to go.

BOBBY. But suppose she tries any of those frothy things on me? You'd better let me go, Molly. (*Goes.*)

MOLLY. Bobby, I want you to stay, and I want you to be nice to her. Aren't you going to?

BOBBY (*turns and looks at her for a moment*). I'll do just exactly what you please, dear.

MOLLY. Dear old Bobby!

She puts out her hand and he takes it as the door opens and URSULA enters. URSULA coughs. BOBBY drops MOLLY'S hand and they turn. URSULA has curled her hair, changed into a pretty soft blouse, taken off her glasses and generally smartened herself up. URSULA is carrying her hat and coat. Lays them on table R.

MOLLY. Oh, Ursula, this is Mr. Menteth—Miss Hammond.

URSULA. }
BOBBY. } How do you do? (*Advance c.*)

MOLLY *crosses to fireplace.*

URSULA. I've heard a good deal about you, Mr. Menteth, from Molly.

BOBBY. I taught Molly to make her first mud pie, Miss Hammond. I hope she's shown her gratitude by telling you of all my good qualities.

MOLLY. Indeed she hasn't. It was a very bad mud pie. Is the car outside? (*Tea-pot on table.*)

BOBBY. Yes, I think I'll tell Timms he needn't wait. This east wind isn't exactly good for his rheumatism. Excuse me just a moment.

Exit door C.L. All this time MOLLY has had her eyes fixed on URSULA, who looks unconscious.

MOLLY. Why, you've altered your hair and curled it.

URSULA (*crossing to glass over mantelpiece R. and touching her hair*). Have I?

MOLLY (*admiringly*). It suits you awfully well. And—isn't that my new blouse you've got on?

URSULA (*turning and smiling*). Yes, dear, I thought you wouldn't mind. Mine was such a dowdy

old thing. I was afraid you'd feel ashamed of introducing me to your Mr. Menteth. So I slipped into this. You don't mind, do you?

MOLLY. Of course not. It was sweet of you to think of it like that. I know how you hate the bother of dressing. You are really going to be nice to Bobby, aren't you?

URSULA. Yes, child; if he's a friend of yours, that is quite recommendation enough for me.

MOLLY (*delighted*). You dear old thing.

Enter BOBBY door L.C.

Now let's have tea. Oh, I meant to make some toast.

URSULA. Let me do that.

BOBBY. I'll help you.

MOLLY. I'll cut the bread.

URSULA *stirs up fire kneeling in front of fireplace.*

MOLLY *cuts bread and BOBBY stands by her.*

BOBBY. Mind my beautiful slices of bread and butter.

URSULA. Did you cut the bread and butter, Mr. Menteth? What a talented person!

BOBBY (*giving fork*). That's about the only talent I have, Miss Hammond. I'm afraid you and Molly think me a horrid Philistine. (*He gives bread.*)

URSULA. Oh, Molly's wrapped up in literature. (*Kneeling. Toasting fork business.*)

BOBBY. The only person I ever met who was wrapped up in *literature* was an old man in the Mile End Road. He wore five *Daily Mails* under his coat.

URSULA (*laughing delightedly*). Oh, Mr. Menteth, how absurd you are! Now, don't be frivolous; come and help me with this toast.

BOBBY (*takes the toast from her*). Let me do it. The fire will scorch your face.

URSULA (*sighing resignedly*). I shan't waste my

time arguing with you. A man with your shaped chin is bound to have his own way in the end. (*Sitting in chair.*)

BOBBY. I wish you'd impress that on Molly. She doesn't believe it.

URSULA. Oh, Molly's one of those independent spirits, and she'll never recognize that man must lead and woman follow. I believe all true women like to feel themselves dominated by a nature stronger than their own.

MOLLY (*puzzled*). But you've always said—— (*At table.*)

URSULA (*laughing*). Oh, Molly dear, don't contract that awful habit of reminding people of their past utterances. It's so boring.

MOLLY (*abruptly*). Shall I put the sugar in for you ?

MOLLY *pouring out tea.*

URSULA. Thanks, dear. Tell me some more about the old man in the Mile End Road, Mr. Men-teth. I often wish I had more opportunity of going amongst the poor and helping them, but it's difficult for a woman. If one could only get hold of the children !

BOBBY (*eagerly*). That's just it, Miss Hammond. Get hold of the children.

MOLLY (*putting URSULA'S tea down beside her*). The future thieves and murderers of the world, who ought to be got rid of somehow.

URSULA (*reproachfully*). Molly, how can you !

MOLLY. Why, it's what you——

MOLLY *up L. cupboard.*

BOBBY. That's right, Miss Hammond. I wish you'd lecture Molly. She's always saying unkind things about the poor little beggars, simply because they're not tubbed every day. (*At fire.*)

URSULA. Molly, isn't that rather cruel of you ! Poor little mites, how are they to blame ?

MOLLY *goes back and sits at table.*

MOLLY (*coldly at table*). I'm not the only person who says unkind things about them.

MOLLY *takes cup and crosses L.*

BOBBY. (*Sits in chair below fire.*) You know, Miss Hammond, I own some tenement property in the East End and try to take an interest in the kiddies. I've asked Molly time after time to come down with me and see them, but she always says she wouldn't know what to say to them, or makes some silly excuse of that kind.

URSULA (*sitting footstool L.*). Oh, I should love to—— (*Stops.*)

MOLLY *back to table.*

BOBBY. Would *you* come down and see them ?

URSULA. There's nothing I'd like so much. Oh, but I should bother you, I should be a nuisance.

MOLLY *back to L. of table.*

BOBBY. Not a bit, I'd be delighted. I'm going down on Saturday. Could you come then ? I'll take you down on the car.

URSULA. Oh, I *should* enjoy it so ; to try and brighten those little lives.

Move from MOLLY.

BOBBY. That's a bargain, then. Will two o'clock do ?

URSULA. Yes, beautifully.

MOLLY *plate in hand.* MOLLY *sits.*

BOBBY. Where shall I call for you ?

URSULA. 24, Penrhyn Place.

BOBBY. You *really* will come ?

URSULA. Nothing shall stop me.

MOLLY (*very coldly from the table*). Bobby, if there's any toast, perhaps you'd be kind enough to give me some.

BOBBY (*jumping up and carrying toast to her*). I'm so sorry! (*Behind table.*)

MOLLY (*still very coldly*). Oh, you needn't be.

URSULA. Before Molly has that toast, she ought to sing us something.

MOLLY. I don't feel like singing.

BOBBY (*at piano*). Molly, do. I don't often hear you sing now.

MOLLY *shakes her head*.

URSULA (*cigarette case*). Molly, don't be affected and refuse.

MOLLY *goes to piano*.

BOBBY (*up stage c.*). No song, no toast. (*Sits chair c., light cigarettes.*)

MOLLY *gets up silently, crosses to piano and begins. The others talk and laugh all through. MOLLY stops after first verse. MOLLY looks round at others now and again as she plays and sings. Business all through.*

BOBBY. Thanks, Molly. But do you really think so, Miss Hammond?

URSULA. Yes, it's one of the finest books I ever read. Don't stop, Molly.

BOBBY. Sing that little song I like so much. You know the one.

MOLLY (*rising coldly*). I've just sung it.

BOBBY. Have you?

MOLLY. Yes, but I think you were too busy talking to notice it. My toast, please. (*Crosses L. to settee with toast.*)

URSULA (*laughing*). Oh, Molly, don't be so fearfully severe.

MOLLY *sits down and eats her toast* L.

BOBBY. Don't you think his style rather like Kipling's ?

URSULA. Yes, but not so fine.

BOBBY. Oh, you're an admirer of Kipling's, Miss Hammond ?

MOLLY. The Prophet of the drunken and debased.

URSULA. You're in a very extraordinary mood to-day, Molly. Don't be so censorious.

BOBBY. I'm trying to educate Molly up to Kipling, Miss Hammond. Can't you help me ?

URSULA. I'm afraid it's hopeless to try and change her opinion on that subject.

BOBBY *turns suddenly and spills tea over URSULA'S blouse.*

BOBBY (*jumps up*). Miss Hammond ! I *am* sorry. What a clumsy brute I am. I can't tell you how sorry I am.

Business with handkerchiefs.

URSULA (*sweetly*). Oh, please don't worry. It's all right.

MOLLY *watching.*

BOBBY. I don't know how I could have been such a fool.

URSULA. Really, it's nothing at all. It's not of the least consequence.

MOLLY (*to herself*). *My blouse. (Breaks plate).*

They talk through it business. BOBBY picks up plate and goes back.

BOBBY. What a careless girl !

MOLLY (*rises c.*). We mustn't keep you, Ursula. Didn't you say you had an article to write or something, and must get away early ?

URSULA. Oh, that doesn't matter.

MOLLY. I thought it was so *very* important.

URSULA. Dear old Molly, I believe that's a gentle hint. I'll get my hat. (*Crosses c.*)

MOLLY (*hurriedly*). Oh, please don't go. I only thought you wanted to.

BOBBY (*rising*). I think it's more like a hint for me. (*Round R. of table.*) Molly usually turns me out when she gets bored, don't you, Molly? Good-bye, Miss Hammond, you won't forget about Saturday afternoon, will you?

URSULA *holds his coat c.*

Oh, don't you bother, Miss Hammond. It's awfully good of you.

URSULA. No, it isn't good, I like to help you. It's woman's duty to serve; it's only when a woman is ill that a man should be the servant. I think you'd be very kind to a woman if she were ill, Mr. Menteth.

MOLLY *at the back turns to them, tapping boot.*

BOBBY. Any man would be, wouldn't he?

MOLLY. Wouldn't he be rather a back-boneless person if he did, rather like a filleted plaice?

URSULA. Molly!

BOBBY. Molly's evidently in one of her perverse moods to-night, Miss Hammond. Don't let her worry you. Good-bye. Two o'clock, 24, Penrhyn Place, on Saturday, don't forget. I'll be *there* with the car. Good-bye.

Exit. As he goes out URSULA hums a little tune and crosses to the glass, gazes at herself contentedly, turns to find MOLLY staring at her L.

MOLLY. Well. (*Down L.*)

URSULA (*R. fireplace*). Well. What on earth's the matter, Molly? You look as cross as two sticks.

MOLLY (*trying to control her temper*). I don't feel in the least cross, only a little surprised.

URSULA (*putting her hat on before the glass*). Really, what's surprised you?

MOLLY. You have.

URSULA. I? In what way?

MOLLY. By your sudden change of opinion on every subject while you talked to Mr. Menteth.

URSULA. My dear child, what earthly business is it of yours what opinions I expressed to Mr. Menteth?

MOLLY (*hotly*). Mr. Menteth's my friend. I am not going to have him made a fool of.

URSULA (*turn*). My dear child, Mr. Menteth is surely old enough to look after himself. It seems to me that you are annoyed because he paid me a little attention.

MOLLY. I am not annoyed at all, and if I am it's simply because my only blouse is ruined.

URSULA. Good gracious, that's nothing. I'll take it home and have it washed. (*Cross L.*)

MOLLY (*suddenly*). You're—you're trying to take Bobby away from me?

URSULA. It didn't occur to me that he required much taking.

MOLLY. But that's what you're doing. You knew we were fond—you knew we were great friends, and you deliberately tried to cut me out with him.

URSULA. Please don't talk nonsense. You said you didn't love him, that nothing would induce you to *marry* him. Is the poor man to go through life a bachelor, then? If I have attracted him, I can't help that. Besides, every woman has a perfect right to make a provision for her future.

MOLLY. But there's no reason why you should make *your* provision out of *my* Bobby.

URSULA. Your Bobby? He didn't strike me as being altogether devoted. Good-bye. I hope you'll feel slightly better tempered next time we meet. I can get out this way, can't I? (*Pointing R.*) I'll remember you to *your* Bobby on Saturday, shall I? as we are going down in the car. Good-bye.

Exit L.

MOLLY. My Bobby. He isn't my Bobby any more. *Cat, CAT, CAT!*

Suddenly bursts into tears at table. Sobs on. Knocking heard. Enter BOBBY L.C.

BOBBY. The door was open, so I walked in. Did I leave my cigarette case here?

MOLLY dries her eyes.

Molly, you're crying.

MOLLY. I'm not. I'm not.

He comes beside her and takes her hand.

I've got something—something in my eye.

BOBBY. Molly, turn round and look at me.

MOLLY (*breaking away, crosses to fireplace*). I won't. Why should I?

BOBBY. Tell me what's the matter?

MOLLY. There isn't anything the matter.

BOBBY. Yes, there is.

MOLLY (*defiantly*). Well, there is. I've just quarrelled with Ursula. (*Up.*) And she's a cat, a cat, a *cat*. (*Crosses L.*)

BOBBY. Molly, she isn't a cat.

MOLLY. Oh no, of course I'm *the cat* for saying she's a cat.

BOBBY. Don't be spiteful, Molly.

MOLLY. I will be spiteful if I want to.

BOBBY. She's a very charming and a very clever girl.

MOLLY. Oh yes, she is *clever*, cleverer even than I thought she was.

BOBBY. And you asked me to be nice to her.

MOLLY. Yes, but didn't ask you to—(*cries*)—to make love to her. (*Crosses R., sits to table*).

Music.

BOBBY. Make love to her. Molly, what do you mean?

He puts his arms round her, she pushes him off.

MOLLY. You asked me to sing.

BOBBY *takes her in his arms.*

And you never listened. You spilt tea over my blouse. She was wearing it, and you never gave me any toast, and—oh, I hate you.

BOBBY. Molly, when are you going to marry me ?

MOLLY. Never, never, *I hate you !* You're going with her on the car on Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

BOBBY. Suppose I'm getting married instead at that time ?

MOLLY (*slowly*). You couldn't go then, could you ?

BOBBY. No, certainly not.

MOLLY. Bobby, you can go and get the special license to-morrow.

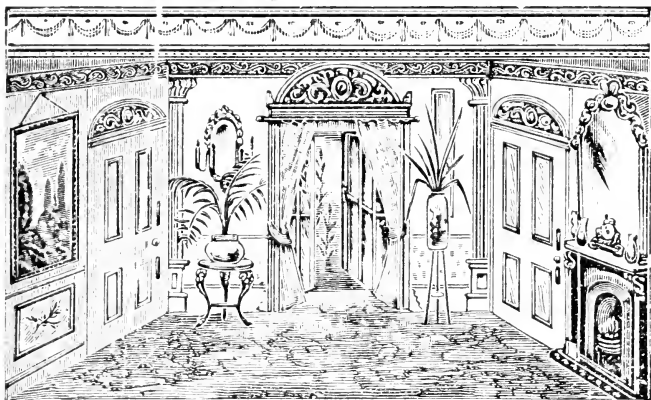
BOBBY. Dear old Molly !

Embrace.

CURTAIN.



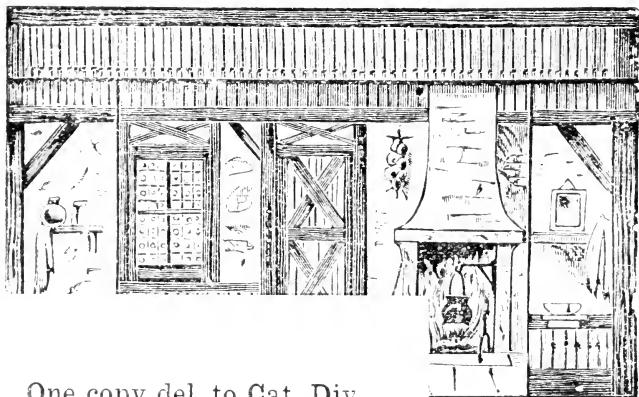
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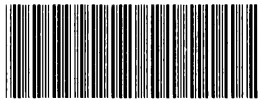
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